

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as currently amended and in view of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 11-25 are currently active in this case. Claim 11 has been amended by the current amendment. No new matter has been added.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 11-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Japanese Patent Publication No. 09-030893 to Shinpei in view of U.S. Patent 6,902,623 to Gurary et al. and U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0011478 to Ratliff et al.; Claims 16 and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shinpei in view of Gurary et al., Ratliff et al., and U.S. Patent Publication No. 2001/0000098 to Fayfield; Claim 18 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shinpei in view of Gurary et al. and Ratliff et al.; Claim 11 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. patent 5,884,009 to Okase in view of Gurary et al. and Ratliff et al.; Claims 19 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Okase in view of Gurary et al., Ratliff et al., and U.S. Patent 6,113,984 to MacLeish; Claims 21-23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Okase in view of Gurary et al., Ratliff et al., MacLeish, and Callaghan; Claim 24 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shinpei in view of Gurary et al., Ratliff et al., and U.S. Patent No. 6,331,697 to Savas; and claim 25 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shinpei in view of Gurary et al., Kubota, and U.S. Patent No. 6,372,048 to Futamura.

Briefly recapitulating, the present invention (Claim 11 as amended) is directed to a substrate processing apparatus including, among other things:

a heater plate, mounted on an upper external surface of the top plate of the transparent case, to transmit the heat generated inside the transparent case to the substrate;

a holding member having an axis penetrating the top plate of the transparent case and the heater plate and projecting from an upper surface of the heater plate, the axis having a plurality of arm portions to hold the substrate at a position spaced from and opposite to the upper surface of the heater plate located below the substrate.

Regarding the prior art rejections, Applicants maintain that Shinpei et al. and Gurary et al. fail to teach that the heater plate is *mounted on an upper external surface of the transparent case*. However, claim 11 has been amended to clarify that the heater plate is mounted on an upper external surface of the top plate of a transparent case. The official action asserts that Ratliff et al. remedies the deficiencies of Shinpei et al. and Gurary et al. Applicants respectfully traverse.

Page 4 of the Official Action asserts that the wafer holder 38 of Ratliff et al. corresponds to the holding member of claim 11 and the heating plate 26 of Ratliff et al. corresponds to the heater plate of claim 11. However, as illustrated in Fig. 1C of Ratliff et al., the wafer holder 38 of Kubota is completely housed inside the transparent case 24. This is in contrast to the configuration defined by claim 11 which provides that the heater plate is mounted on an external surface of a top plate the transparent case. With Ratliff et al.'s configuration, heat generated by the heating element inside the transparent case cannot be transmitted to the substrate which is provided outside of the transparent case.

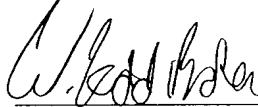
Consequently, Shinpei is not believed to anticipate or render obvious the subject matter defined by Claim 11 when considered alone or in combination with the applied art of record, including Ratliff et al.

Claims 12-25 depend from Claim 11 and are believed to be allowable for at least the same reasons that Claim 11 is believed to be allowable.

In view of the foregoing, no further issues are believed to remain. An early and favorable action is therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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